

- b) Within the Single State Agency, the Division of Medicaid Services has been designated as the medical assistance unit. Attachment 1.2-B contains a description of the medical assistance unit and an organization chart of the unit.

1.3 Statewide Operation

The plan is in operation on a Statewide basis in accordance with all requirements under the approved waiver granted by the Secretary. The plan is State administered.

1.4 Medical Referral Committee

The Medicaid Agency utilizes the Medical Referral Committee to advise on matters pertaining to health and medical care services in the CNMI. The Committee authorizes approval for off-island care when required services are not available on-island.

It is the policy of the CNMI Government, that when the medical facilities in the Commonwealth Health System are not able to provide adequate diagnostic evaluation or care of a patient's illness, the government is obligated to seek services outside the system for that patient.

All off-island referrals, except emergencies, must be authorized by the Medical Referral Committee. The Medical Referral Committee is established pursuant to By-Laws of the Organized Medical Staff at the Commonwealth Health Center. The Medical Referral Committee was established to safeguard indiscriminate referrals of patients to medical facilities outside the Commonwealth health care system.

The Committee is composed of licensed physicians who review and evaluate the condition of referral candidates to decide whether the patient can be adequately treated within the Commonwealth health care system. If the determination is made that the Commonwealth health care system is inadequate, the Medical Referral Committee then recommends that the patient be referred to the closest medical facility that can provide the needed treatment or services.